

OREGON CITIZEN MIKE HAWASH  
ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY MA-  
TERIAL WITNESS LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I am reflecting on the words of the majority leader, actions speak for themselves, and I think we are going to have a series of discussions here on the floor of this Chamber dealing with the actions of the Republican majority and the mismatch between what the American public wants and needs. The notion that we are going to cut veterans benefits when we are sending our veterans-to-be into battle in the Middle East, the fact that we are providing even the tax treatment for the veterans that he referenced was achieved only after the Republican majority was embarrassed with their original proposal. They had to withdraw it because it confused assistance for our veterans with aid for people who gamble from overseas and manufacture tackle boxes. Mr. Speaker, I would like instead today to reflect on a moment of what times of stress especially in war serve as a mirror for who we are. There have been times in our history like World War II where it has reflected in a very positive sense on our character, it has brought out the best in the American public, but also during that same period of time, there was also reflected some of the things that we are least proud of. For example, our treatment of legal Japanese residents and Japanese citizens in this country, herding them up and putting them in concentration camps.

One of the problems I have with the current situation is that it is fraught with danger, and if we are not careful, we will have a risk of losing track of who we are. I was struck last fall when I read an article in the Washington Post that talks about how the material witness law in this country casts dozens of citizens, of Americans, into limbo, where there were 44 people who were jailed as material witnesses and kept in maximum security conditions for a few days, in some cases for several months or longer. Seven of them were American citizens. I was troubled when I read that account, Mr. Speaker, but I must say that I was shaken when I saw it occur in my community, where 3 weeks ago Maher Hawash, Mike to his friends, a 38-year-old software engineer, although born in the West Bank and who grew up in Kuwait, has been an American citizen for over a dozen years, he lives with his wife Lisa, raising three children here in our community of Portland, Oregon, was arrested in the Intel parking lot at 6:30 in the morning. At the same time almost a dozen armed agents swept into his home. I heard from his former boss, Steve McGeady, a friend of mine, in Portland, who was stunned by the accusation but more by the treatment of

this American citizen, kept in solitary confinement for 3 weeks under this material witness warrant, attorney and family subject to a gag order. This is a person with strong ties to the community and does not appear to represent any risk of flight.

Citizens who know Mike have organized their own Web site, freemikehawash.org, that says it all. Mr. Speaker, he had a hearing yesterday but he is bound over again under these conditions. We do not know what is going on. He is going to be kept in detention, it looks like, for at least another 2 to 3 weeks. Mr. Speaker, this is deeply troubling treatment for an American citizen. Put him before the grand jury now. If they think he has committed some sort of crime, charge him. If not, for heaven's sake, release him. We should not have a shroud of secrecy. We should not have indefinite detention in solitary confinement for American citizens. We should not be punishing them, their family and friends.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, at times difficult situations provide a mirror. I would hope that the mirror that we hold up to ourselves at this time should show America at its best, not at its worst.

#### IRAQI LIBERATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to support the actions of the world's greatest fighting force, the United States Armed Forces, which is currently about 360,000 men and women deployed overseas defending our freedom. Though the terrains may differ greatly, their overall objectives remain the same, Mr. Speaker. From the sweltering jungles of Colombia and South Korea to the barren moonscapes of Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. forces put life and limb in harm's way to maintain the security of our great country. War is a concept not easily understood, never black and white, its ramifications always permanent and, of course, severe. The fighting men and women of the United States know the consequences of war, yet continue to place upon their shoulders this great mantle of responsibility. Though victory in war always comes at a price, our efforts in the Iraqi theater have yielded great success. Our Armed Forces have liberated thousands of Iraqis and have begun the delivery of much needed humanitarian support. Saddam's regime seems to be on its knees, ready to collapse. In what has been a historic campaign, U.S. Marines, a sea-based service, have marched inland to Baghdad in what has been the deepest land penetration ever by its air-ground team of planes, helicopters, troops and tanks. American troops have Baghdad surrounded. We have demonstrated an

ability to insert troops deep into the city and the 1st Brigade of the United States Army recently renamed Saddam International Airport to Baghdad International. The evil and torturous regime of Saddam Hussein and his Baath party cronies seems to be at its end, all due to the valiant efforts of coalition forces. Though support for this operation has been great and widespread, we as a body have been forced to face the politics of war. We have been faced with a task of funding this war and making sure that our troops are supplied with the best equipment in the world. This week we must pass the wartime supplemental conference report as soon as possible in order to keep our military machine safe and, of course, efficient. We must also continue to show the world that what we are doing is right and for the benefit of our global safety. We must uproot Saddam and show the world the atrocities that he has committed. So far, the terrorist links have been established, Mr. Speaker. Al Qaeda terrorists fought against coalition troops in southern Iraq. Foreign nationals—Egyptians, Jordanians, Saudis, Syrians, Yemenis—were captured Sunday and led U.S. soldiers to their training grounds at Salman Pak. And, most convincing, raids of the Ansar al-Islam camps in northern Iraq revealed extensive al Qaeda ties for this group believed to have extensive, high-ranking connections with the Iraqi regime. As initial reports concerning chemical weapons become more clear, we will learn the truth behind Saddam Hussein's lies. All we can do is pray that the maniacal leader will think of the people, the 4.5 million Iraqi citizens, before he considers unleashing all this chemical arsenal.

Mr. Speaker, after Baghdad is secured and the Republican Guard is completely destroyed, we will be faced with the task of reconstructing Iraq. But as eyes turn toward the U.N., many will turn to the rich oil fields of Iraq and the many ways in which their countries think they can profit from our military's work. Countries that denounced our actions will look for ways to get their hands on some of this Iraqi oil. France and its allies claim the United Nations is the only body with the international legitimacy to administer Iraq. But, Mr. Speaker, is it? The United Nations failed miserably in its supervision of Kosovo, Bosnia and Somalia. Until Bush stepped in last year, it had completely dropped any attempt to get Iraq to disarm. The United Nations has never successfully fostered a democracy. This is not surprising since many if not most of its members are nondemocratic countries and a police state like Libya heads the U.N. human rights commission.

There is at least one group of people among whom the United Nations has no legitimacy. That is the 24 million Iraqis who have suffered under more than two decades of Saddam Hussein's rule. Iraqis have seen U.N. inspectors